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# Social Progress



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# Social Progress

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## FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT . . .

### The Church and Agriculture

**A**N IMPORTANT section of the 1954 General Assembly pronouncements deals with agriculture and rural life. The section embodies the recommendations of a study committee on agriculture set up by the Counseling Committee on Social Education and Action in the fall of 1953. The subcommittee held meetings in Philadelphia and in Washington, to which were invited agricultural specialists as well as representative town and country pastors. This is the first time that the General Assembly pronouncements have given anything like adequate treatment to agricultural problems. The pronouncements in this area, which deal with surpluses, migratory farm labor, farm price policies, and conservation, will be of great interest to town and country groups throughout the Church.

Our Church has a far larger rural constituency than many realize. Of the 8,560 churches in our communion, nearly six thousand are located in towns under ten thousand in population and are therefore classified as "town and country" churches. These churches represent only about one fourth of the total membership of the denomination. Even so, the pronouncements concerning agriculture have an immediate and direct bearing on the economic activities of a significant proportion of our Presbyterian constituency in the country.

According to the Department of Agriculture there are just over five million farms in the United States. Of these farms, 69 per cent are classified by the Government as commercial farms. This classification is subject to analysis, however, because it includes all farms that sell products in the amount of \$250 or more per year. Only 40 per cent of America's farms produce cash incomes of \$2,500 or over. It is significant that national farm legislation provides protections and safeguards for the commercial farmer. Very little attention is given at present to the needs of the noncommercial farm families of America.

Over recent years there has been a happy decline in the percentage of farms operated by tenants. It is a fact, however, that the

proportion of land operated by farmers who own their own farms is somewhat smaller than in 1935. Twenty years ago the average acreage was 155; at present it is slightly over 200. Modern machinery makes it possible for a farm family to operate more land. By the same token, a modern farm represents a much greater investment in capital than in former years. A typical Iowa farm in 1940, for example, represented an investment of \$39,000; in 1951 it represented \$90,000.

Farm housing is a clue to agricultural prosperity. In terms of a rating scale that takes into account several important factors, 36 per cent of America's farmhouses are rated as low in quality, 25 per cent are rated intermediate, and 39 per cent are rated high. Poor housing seems to predominate in farm regions where tenancy is high.

It is proper for the Church to give attention to the problems of agriculture. We all are daily benefactors of farm-produced food and fiber. We should learn to think of American agriculture in terms of people—the vast company of men and women involved in the production and processing of “our daily bread.”

## How High Is the Wall That Separates Church and State?

THE idea of eliminating religion from all government would have been completely alien to the founding fathers of this country, according to a University of Chicago political scientist, Professor Jerome G. Kerwin. Dr. Kerwin spoke during the opening session of a workshop on “Home, Church, and School Relations in the Religious Education of Children and Youth,” held at the University of Chicago during the last week of July.

Dr. Kerwin pointed out that the Congress which proposed the first amendment to the Constitution also passed the Northwest Ordinance which made it a function of government to spread religion in the undeveloped territories.

He cited six significant principles affecting the relationships between Church and State.

1. The State is not and cannot be all-encompassing or the last word in man's life.
2. Religion and political life cannot be cut apart. The citizen is concerned with both.
3. Co-operation between Church and State is essential.
4. Moral law or religious teaching is supreme over temporal concerns, such as the state. It is the standard by which all acts are to be judged.



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5. Considering the importance of moral law or religion, there must be a setting in which it can be taught and followed—even to the criticism of public acts. This we call the freedom of church or of religion.

6. There must be recognition of the dignity of the human person, the inviolability of his conscience, and the fundamental equality of men. This principal stems from the Judaeo-Christian heritage of modern society.

There are unrealistic people who would define separation of Church and State in such a way as to prohibit the state from any concern at all for religion, and vice versa, a definition that is neither possible nor desirable. "The condemnation of religion to a Sunday exile in the holy name of separation of Church and State can never fit the role of a dynamic religion or the functioning of moral politics."

## Watch Your Language

IN A much discussed article in *The Saturday Evening Post* (April 24, 1954), Dr. Daniel A. Poling said that he had found some interesting parallels between *A Letter to Presbyterians* and certain issues of the Cominform Journal. The implication is that Dr. John Mackay and/or other members of the General Council seem to have been reading Communist literature as part of their preparation for writing the now famous encyclical to Presbyterian ministers and members.

In the August issue of *Christian Herald*, Dr. Poling attempts to document his charge. As one instance, he refers to the phrase "great vitality." He says: "In *A Letter to Presbyterians* [this phrase] appears in the sixth sentence of the fourth paragraph as follows: 'Communism which is at bottom a secular religious faith of great vitality. . . .' In the Cominform Journal, page 1, October, 1953, appears the following: 'The past four years have demonstrated to the entire world the great vitality. . . .'"

So now we have to find a synonym for *great vitality*. How about *vast vigor*? Or, reader, what do you suggest? We hope no worried patriot counts the times "great vitality" has appeared (as a phrase, that is) in SOCIAL PROGRESS!

## Congressional Roll Call

COPIES of the voting record of members of the 83d Congress are now available. (See inside back cover for ordering directions.) The record, entitled *Roll Call*, is based on selected key issues of interest to Chris-

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tian citizens, such as refugees, MSA including Point IV, trade agreements, wheat for Pakistan, farm program, housing and urban development, health program, investigation of foundations, wire tapping, tidelands, Bricker Proposals, and cloture rules.

The issues dealt with in the closing days of the 1954 session could not be included because of publishing deadlines. Obviously, only issues on which record votes were taken could be selected. Often a Congressman's work in committees and his participation in voice votes on key issues are much more revealing of his real influence as a national leader than his voting record.

Even so, we believe that a careful study of *Roll Call* will be helpful to those citizens who are sincere in doing their homework in preparation for voting in the fall elections.

## Preview

WE ARE proud to offer a timely article by Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Benson. His discussion of the sensitive price support issue is illuminating.

The migrant farm labor problem is helpfully presented by G. Shubert Frye of New York Synod's staff. His article, "Christian Vocation in the Bean Fields," is based on firsthand experience with the migrant labor program in rural New York.

We believe that many of our minister readers will make good homiletic use (with needed adaptations) of the angleworm illustration at the beginning of Professor Otis Duncan's article, "Soil Depletion and Human Erosion." The article is a moving documentation of the national need for better and faster soil conservation and renovation.

We hail the American Legion report on UNESCO—the controversial, usually misunderstood, cultural, scientific, and educational agency of the United Nations. The report, product of a special committee which conducted a thoroughgoing investigation, appears in part on pages 24-26. The report answers the current unjust criticisms directed against the agency, delineates its purposes and policies, and encourages active support. Many ministers, and other church leaders using SOCIAL PROGRESS, will know how and where to put this report to good use.

We commend to you the Sanctuary pages, prepared by H. B. Sissel, the Washington report by Helen Lineweaver, and other features.

—Clifford Earle, Margaret Kuhn, H. B. Sissel



# Agricultural Abundance— Blessing or Burden?

*By the HON. EZRA TAFT BENSON, Secretary, U. S. Department of Agriculture*

ANY nation than can produce all the food its people need is richly blessed. And a nation that can help to feed hungry peoples of other nations is doubly endowed.

Our country is in that position today. It has been blessed with the greatest agricultural abundance in its history. We have enough wheat to provide our people with the staff of life for two whole years; and enough cotton to clothe us for the same period.

When the new crop of corn is harvested this fall, we will still have about a billion bushels of old corn on hand. We have more than a billion pounds of dairy products stored up under the Government's price support program and are storing up millions more every day. And the Government owns nearly a billion pounds of cottonseed oil, as well as smaller amounts of many other commodities.

Having such an abundance normally is good cause for rejoicing. We as a nation should be extremely grateful for these bountiful blessings, and we are grateful. But the circumstances under which these supplies have been accumulated have created a burdensome problem.

To paraphrase the Scriptures, "our cups are running over." Our storehouses and bins are bulging with these accumulated stocks, which we now call "surpluses." They are surplus to our immediate needs. They would not be, however, if our farm programs are changed to make these commodities more readily available to consumers, both at home and abroad.

Unless we can find suitable outlets for these commodities and others that keep piling up, we run a great risk of wasting large quantities of them. The dairy products cannot be held indefinitely in storage. Most grains can be stored several years, but they are subject to serious damage by insects and rodents. Such waste of our valuable food products at a time when millions of people are hungry is neither good economics nor good diplomacy.

In addition to the danger of waste, our Government is running up a tremendous expense to keep these products in storage. For example, it is costing more than \$700,000 a day just to pay the storage costs. That amounts to more than \$250 million a year.

The Commodity Credit Corporation, the agency of the Department of Agriculture that provides the money for price support programs, now has about \$6½ billion invested in commodities under these programs. If we continue to accumulate excess supplies at the rate we have in the last year, we may well have nearly \$9 billion tied up in stored farm commodities by the time this year's harvests are in. That would be equivalent to about one third of the value of all farm products marketed in a year.

**The price support programs** that have been in effect the last few years were designed to meet the needs of war. They do not fit into a peacetime economy. They were intended to help to assure the farmer a good price while he was increasing production. They no longer do even that. We have invested more than \$2 billion to help to support wheat at the required 90 per cent of parity. Yet the average market price of wheat has been running as low as 77 per cent of parity.

High rigid supports have been maintained at the expense of both the farmer and the consumer. In addition to seeing his prices decline rather steadily in the last five years, the farmer also has lost a large share of the market for some of his major commodities. With billions of dollars' worth of these commodities being held off the market by the

Government, prices to consumers have remained high.

Support at 90 per cent of parity on soil-depleting crops also has been at the expense of our land. Thousands of acres that should have been planted to grass or trees for conservation have remained in cultivation only to produce excess supplies of grain to go into storage.

The rapid increase in our population may soon require the use of all cultivable land. Now is the time to store up reserve strength in the soil.

For a good many years now, six commodities—corn, wheat, cotton, rice, peanuts, and tobacco—have been given preferential treatment under the Government's price support program as "basics." Time and experience have shown, however, that these six commodities are not necessarily the most basic, either in the national economy or in the national diet.

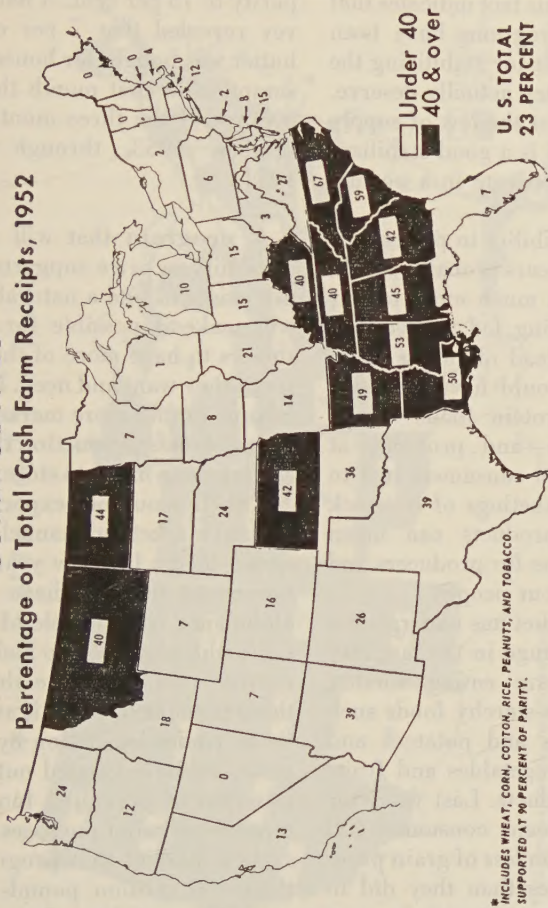
From the standpoint of the national economy, only about 23 per cent of the nation's total farm income is derived from the so-called basic crops. Yet nine tenths of the \$6½ billion committed to price support operations are tied up in the six basic commodities. More than half of the receipts from all farm marketings comes from commodities that are not under price supports of any kind.

During the last twenty years, prices received by farmers for non-supported commodities have aver-



# CASH RECEIPTS FROM BASIC COMMODITIES\*

Percentage of Total Cash Farm Receipts, 1952



\* INCLUDES WHEAT, CORN, COTTON, RICE, PEANUTS, AND TOBACCO. SUPPORTED AT 90 PERCENT OF PARITY.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NEG. 816-54(5) AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

This shows by states the cash receipts for all six basic crops now supported at 90 per cent of parity as a percentage of total cash farm receipts. Income from these basic commodities is concentrated in 9 Southern states, one Midwest state (Kansas), and 2 Northern states (North Dakota and Montana). There are 5 states (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Nevada) with less than one per cent of their cash receipts from the basics. Many other states also receive only a small percentage of their income from the basics. Examples: Wisconsin, 1 per cent; Iowa, 8 per cent; California, 13 per cent; Pennsylvania, 6 per cent; New York, 2 per cent; and Florida, 7 per cent.

aged slightly higher in relation to parity than the prices of those commodities which have been under price support. This fact indicates that price support programs have been given more credit for stabilizing the economy than they actually deserve. It is evidence that the law of supply and demand still is a good stabilizer if permitted to operate in a normal manner.

A greater flexibility in prices during the last few years probably would have resulted in much more of our grain supply being fed to livestock and poultry instead of piling up in storage. That would have provided more of the protein foods—meat, milk, and eggs—and probably at lower prices than consumers had to pay. Larger marketings of livestock and livestock products can mean higher net income for producers and better diets for our people.

The national diet has undergone a considerable change in the last fifty years. People are eating smaller quantities of the starchy foods such as cereal grains and potatoes and more of other vegetables and fruits and animal products. Last year, for example, Americans consumed 222 pounds per person *less* of grain products and potatoes than they did in 1909. But they ate 223 pounds more of such foods as meats, eggs, fish, dairy products, fruits, and vegetables.

Striking evidence of the effect of price on amounts of food consumed

is what happened in April after support prices on dairy products had been dropped from 90 per cent of parity to 75 per cent. A national survey revealed that 7 per cent more butter was bought for household consumption in that month than in the average of the three months of November, 1953, through January, 1954.

**A program** that will allow for flexibility in price supports will permit prices to find a natural level and will make it possible for our consumers to have more of the kinds of foods they want and need. It also will help us to find more markets abroad for the excess production that is now costing us so much to store.

Although our food exports through normal marketing channels have declined in the last few years, it does not mean that we have kept our abundance from people of other nations who need food so badly. To the contrary, we have done about everything possible to make it available to them. Under legislation by our Congress, we have carried out a special program of providing foods for international relief purposes.

As a part of that program, more than 400 million pounds of dairy products were shipped to needy people overseas between April, 1953, and July, 1954. About half of that total was donated outright to domestic church and welfare groups which bore the expense of getting the food



# CASH RECEIPTS FROM NONSUPPORTED COMMODITIES\*

Percentage of Total Cash Farm Receipts, 1952



\* INCLUDES MEAT ANIMALS, POULTRY AND EGGS, FRUITS, NUTS AND MISCELLANEOUS CROPS.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NEG. 815-54(5) AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

This shows that from coast to coast a large majority of states receive more than half their cash farm receipts from nonsupported commodities. There are 16 states that get over two thirds of their cash receipts from non-supported products like meat animals, poultry, eggs, fruits, nuts, vegetables, and miscellaneous crops. During the past 21 years, prices of these nonsupported products have averaged 7 per cent higher than prices of the supported products, relative to the base period.

to other countries and saw that it was distributed where it was most needed.

Our various national church organizations are to be highly commended for their splendid co-operation in this great humanitarian project. They helped to make possible the shipment of 60 million pounds of butter, 31 million of cheese, and 113 million pounds of nonfat dry milk to foreign people who were suffering from hunger.

The other 200 million pounds of dairy products, primarily nonfat dry milk, were sold for small token payments to friendly foreign Governments for similar purposes. A large share of the total was made available to children of other lands through the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.

We shall continue to make our abundance available to our own people and to other nations for relief purposes. Charity is one of the finest attributes of persons or Governments to help to meet emergency condi-

tions. It is not, however, a solution to our problem of developing better international relations nor the problem of avoiding unmanageable surpluses at home.

Our own countrymen, and most people in other countries too, I'm sure, prefer to earn the food they eat and the clothes they wear. That's why it is so important that we as an outstanding producing nation must develop a program that will make it easier for consumers at home and abroad to share our abundance through normal trade channels.

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NOTE: There is an interesting account of the new farm bill and the agricultural surplus bill in the Citizenship section of the magazine this month—pages 27-28. Secretary Benson's article along with this legislative information and the pronouncements on pages 16-18 will provide good background material for a study of farm price problems.

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### To Be Used in Trust

The land and the material wealth of the earth come from God. God has given them to man to use. But man is always the steward, never the absolute owner. Having received land, cattle, and all other wealth as a mark of God's confidence and love, he is accountable for the use he makes of it. "Moreover it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy" (1 Cor. 4: 2). The selfish use of that which belongs to another is severely condemned. The ideal was that man should enjoy to the full the good land which God gave him, but should not be permitted to exploit or abuse it to the hurt of his fellowmen.—*From The Bible and Our Common Life, by Huber F. Klemme. Published by The Christian Education Press, 1953. Used by permission.*



# Christian Vocation in the Bean Fields

By G. SHUBERT FRYE, *Associate Executive, the Synod of New York; former chairman, Rural Church Institute.*

WHEN the bean pickers first came to King Ferry in central New York fourteen years ago, a group of ministers and lay people from Southern Cayuga Larger Parish paid them a visit of welcome. In response to a question about worship services in the camp, the group were assured that services were very much wanted—two or three times a week—so that these people would know they were “still doing the Lord’s work.”

Later in the evening a group of these Florida workers sat out under the stars overlooking one of the finger lakes and timidly sang some of their spirituals in an effort to transplant a little of home to the strange soil. Such scenes as these always formed a kind of parable for me of the spiritual hunger of migrant workers as they have come to our state in increasing numbers. Surely we in the churches cannot serve the Lord unless we are serving them and working by their side to realize together our Christian heritage.

## Who They Are

Three major groups form the bulk of migratory workers in the United States. The Home Missions Division of the National Council of the

Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. outlines them as follows: (1) Spanish-speaking peoples, including Puerto Ricans and those of Mexican ancestry; (2) Negroes from Florida, Georgia, and other Southern states; and (3) Anglos who have been forced from Southern agriculture by mechanization. The Mexican group includes American citizens, Mexican nationals under contract, and “wet-backs,” who are thus named because they enter the country illegally by wading across the Rio Grande. Some Puerto Ricans and Bahamans come under Government work agreements or contracts and other Puerto Ricans come on their own.

“Migrants are children of misfortune,” says the Report of the President’s Commission on Migratory Labor, *Migratory Labor in American Agriculture*, 1951 (available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C., 75 cents). “They are the rejects of those sectors of agriculture and of other industries undergoing change. We depend upon misfortune to build up our force of agricultural workers and when the supply is low because there is not enough misfortune at home, we rely

on misfortune abroad to replenish the supply."

The General Assembly, meeting last May in Detroit, described these migrants as "in most cases politically unfranchised, economically unorganized, and socially disadvantaged."

### How They Live

Our experience in New York State is fairly typical though we have fewer migrants than some other states. Our migrant population runs up toward 25,000 annually and consists mostly of Negroes from Florida who follow the crops up the Eastern seaboard. They work in potatoes, fruit, beans, and other vegetables from Long Island, up the Hudson, and across the state to Lake Ontario and Lake Erie. They live and work in more than half of the counties of the state, which, according to the subcommittee on migrant workers of our synod's Committee on National Missions, means fifteen of our twenty presbyteries. Most of them come in family groups by truck, standing or seated on benches, some by bus, and some in their own jalopies.

They occupy all sorts of camps in varying degrees of adequacy or inadequacy—barns, sheds, and abandoned farmhouses, some with rotting floors, one-hinged doors, or broken windows. Sometimes as many as forty people are packed into a single old frame building. Good water and sanitary facilities are often far less than might be desired, and some-

times far below a standard of decency and healthfulness.

Employment is often handled not by growers themselves but by labor contractors or crew leaders who may control the conditions of labor, payroll, and camp activities, including concessions for groceries, liquor and gambling, through which many avenues are open for financial self-enrichment.

### What Can We Do?

What do we in our churches and state Governments do to help two million people in conditions like these across the land?

We have been doing better in recent years than formerly. For several decades the Home Missions Council of North America, now the Home Missions Division of the National Council of Churches, has performed a vital ministry with altogether too little support or even awareness on the part of the churches themselves, except for the women's mission groups and councils of churchwomen.

One of the earliest services to be provided in addition to worship and pastoral leadership was child care, generally for preschool and other younger children. Child-care centers are a wonderful boon for working mothers and their children. Instead of being eaten by ants in the onion field the baby is cool, clean, restful, well-fed, and happily occupied while the mother is free from worry and



distraction. In some states, as in New York, this service is now provided by growers and processors in co-operation with the state, although in our situation there are too few centers in operation.

A ministry of Christian friendliness through worship, counseling, education, and recreation is conducted by student chaplains and other workers who are recruited from our theological schools and colleges. This is a mobile ministry and is made practical as well as dramatic through the use of the "Harvester" station wagon equipped with everything possible to help to meet the spiritual and social needs of the people. A typical scene is described in this way:

"We found a group living in an isolated spot miles away from anywhere. Here, between the houses in a dirty, down-at-the-heel place, the Harvester arrived with the organ, balls and bats, and other play equipment. From toddlers to adolescents, the youngsters flocked around. When the parents came back from the fields, they stared in astonishment, then their faces broke into broad grins and one exclaimed, 'This is the first time anyone's cared enough to come way out here'" (*Harvester News*, March, 1954, National Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.).

The meagerness of our program is fairly clear when we learn that there are just eighteen such Harvesters

available in the country. The Committee on Migrant Work of the New York State Council of Churches and Home Missions Division is well organized with area and county groups. It employs a dozen theological students, two or three adult workers, and co-operates with two student service units, and yet reaches only approximately twenty per cent of the migrants in the state.

Education is a basic need. The children of migrants are called the nation's "largest single reservoir of illiterates. . . . They enter school later, attend fewer days, show the greatest retardation, achieve the least progress, and drop out of school the earliest" (*Harvester News*). The President's Commission reports that "as a group, they are retarded from two to five years as compared with resident children." Senator Hubert Humphrey has said, "Children of migrant workers now have a lower educational standard than their parents had twenty years ago."

The Home Missions Division is moving in to try to meet the challenge. Pilot summer schools have been conducted for migrant children with an attractive, nonsectarian and practical-life curriculum. They have been well received by state educational officials. New Jersey's Department of Education has responded with an experimental school of its own. The Wisconsin Welfare Council has followed suit.

Robert Laubach, Syracuse Univer-

sity faculty member, and son of Frank Laubach, has helped to launch a literacy education campaign in cooperation with our New York committee with the use of methods well known the world over. This is an emphasis that is well adapted to needs and conditions in migrant camps.

Other promising educational emphases in the program cover various crafts and skills such as cooking, sewing, carpentry, 4-H projects, scouting, and planned parenthood education, as well as counseling for expectant and young mothers.

### **Public Conscience Necessary**

Public health and welfare services are extremely meager in some states. These as well as other phases of the migrant problem such as child labor, wages and working conditions, housing and sanitation require state legislation and law enforcement. The education of an informed and conscientious public is essential to any lasting achievement in getting good laws and law observance. This public education is an important social action field. Christian people should be informed about legislative measures that are needed to improve and safeguard the conditions under which migrants live and work.

Migrant workers are spilling over into our cities and becoming permanent residents causing complications in already overcrowded city housing

and underemployment situations. Crime, juvenile delinquency, health problems result. Again the need is for an aroused public conscience.

Basically, migrant agricultural workers who cross state lines every year and many times within a year, and who harvest produce that travels across state lines, form a national problem. The President's Commission recommended first of all the establishment of a Federal committee on migratory farm labor, to be appointed by and responsible to the President, and to be representative of the public and several Federal agencies.

The biggest job to be done, however, is not in Washington nor in state capitals, nor in Home Missions offices—the biggest job to be done is in the camps, fields, roads, and communities where migrants are. It cannot be done alone by a tiny staff of employed workers. It can be done only by many concerned people. It does not involve primarily social services nor even a formal religious ministry. It involves community acceptance—real, honest acceptance and understanding. These are born out of a genuine Christian faith in which there is such love for Christ that Christ is seen in every child and youth, man and woman, who needs the basic materials of the good life. This is *our* Christian vocation in the bean fields.



# Soil Depletion and Human Erosion

By OTIS DURANT DUNCAN, *Department of Sociology and Rural Life, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College; President, Rural Sociological Society, 1952-1953; member several other academic and professional societies.*

SOCIETIES rise and fall largely in accord with the life cycle of the soil. Human populations, material culture, social institutions, and moral and spiritual values feed upon the essence of the soil. When the soil wears out, societies decay.

Angleworms grown in sterile soil are small, lean, gaunt, pale, weak, and stunted. The people living on similar soils exhibit the same characteristics. They are lazy, inert, fatalistic, pessimistic, and superstitious, besides being emaciated, sallow, and cadaverous in appearance. Rich black soil produces large, fat, vigorous angleworms of ruddy features, reddish complexion, and defiant, independent, and even impudent dispositions. Also, it produces people who are healthy, active, energetic, self-reliant, buoyant, optimistic, hardy, and strong. Thus, if other forces are equal, a good way to tell if a soil has enough fertility to support a vigorous human population is to examine its angleworms.

Careless and exploitative use of the soil is one of its most rapid destroyers. Clean culture, row crop cultivation, plowing with the slope, and

burning of residues leave land exposed to the ravages of winds, rain, and extremes of temperature. Added to this, overcropping, overgrazing, and other forms of soil mining deplete the fertility of land more rapidly than nature can restore it. Modern science can recommend numerous practices capable of minimizing these dangers. There is now little excuse for failure to conserve the soil. Besides, there are numerous reasons why it is an imperious necessity.

**Maintaining** the "balance of nature," or the "ecological balance," is one of the most important keys to agricultural prosperity of a permanent sort. Crop rotations, "sabbatical years," and the planting of soil-building and soil-conserving crops facilitate this process. Man's disregard for nature's balance has not only destroyed millions of acres of fertile farm land, but it has also "lowered the bars" to innumerable pests and diseases which assault both plants and animals grown for human use. For example, termites have been driven into human habitations,

*(Continued on page 19)*

# Agriculture and Rural Life

**T**HE goal of farmers throughout human history has been to overcome hunger and want through abundant production of food and fiber. In this task American agriculture has been prominently successful. The gifts of God, represented by fertile soil and favorable climate, coupled with the God-given skills and ingenuity of men operating in a free society greatly influenced by our Protestant Christian heritage, have combined to bring us into an era of agricultural abundance. Today a progressively smaller fraction of our national population on farms is able to produce enough and to spare. Truly, we can say with the ancient writer, "The Lord our God hath brought us into a good land."

## I. Surpluses

We call for the careful management and use of agricultural surpluses so as (1) to provide a prudent reserve of storable grains and fibers against days of uncontrollable production hazard and other national emergencies, and (2) to make maximum provision for overcoming human hunger and want.

This vast productive capacity presents America with certain opportunities and certain challenges. The first of these is the opportunity to emulate Joseph of old by setting up a prudent reserve of the storable grains and fibers against days of need. In a nation of growing population, already in excess of 160,000,000 people, careful estimates indicate that 1,000,000,000 bushels of grain (wheat, corn, and others) and 4,000,000 to 5,000,000 bales of cotton are by no means excessive amounts for such a provident stockpile. We believe that approximately such amounts in storage should be welcomed and no longer called surplus.

A. When stock on hand of storable commodities reaches a volume appreciably in excess of these figures we recommend the following lines of social action:

1. Programs designed to encourage increased consumption and use, including distribution through public and private relief channels at home and abroad to meet genuine human need, and development of secondary and alternate uses for these commodities. For example, the campaign of the dairy industry to encourage the use of milk and milk products, comparable with present-day promotion of alcoholic beverages, is already doing much

*General Assembly Pronouncements, approved by the General  
Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in May of 1954*

to reduce surpluses of dairy products. Special arrangements for the disposal of surpluses in foreign countries through relief and mission agencies prepared to distribute them to the needy and destitute so that they do not inflict injury on the domestic economies of other countries.

2. Incentive programs designed to encourage and aid farmers to shift production to commodities for which there is greater demand and to transfer their efforts to other highly nutritive lines of production.

3. Conservation programs designed to supplement our stockpiles of commodities when needed by a further fertility reserve in the soil, which is our responsibility as God's stewards.

B. Perishable commodities present an additional set of problems. The conscience of mankind cries against the waste and spoilage which have sometimes accompanied abundant production of these foodstuffs. Programs for handling excessive productive capacity in these lines should take account of the nature of these commodities, which are generally nonstorable, highly nutritive, and readily consumable. These characteristics suggest that emphasis should be placed on programs designed to encourage and facilitate prompt distribution and consumption of these commodities.

C. Only when we are assured that all possible efforts have been expanded to make maximum provision for overcoming human hunger and want can we, as Christians, sanction a program of production limitation. Even then, we would hope that the production control program be geared to a conservation program which will store fertility in the soil for the use of future years and future generations.

## **II. Migratory Farm Labor**

We call for (1) individual Christians and local churches to show Christian concern as neighbors and employers of migrants in their vicinities; and (2) we urge state and Federal Governments to work toward adequate legislation to provide for the needs of these workers in a Christian manner.

Unfortunately, certain types of agriculture offer only intermittent employment for the seasonal worker. The development of mechanized agriculture has tended to foster the growth of peak and valley demands for labor in a succession of geographical areas.

Studies in 1947 estimated that the number of agricultural and industrial



migrants range from 1,000,000 to 5,000,000 individuals. Migrant workers have always created wealth for the nation, the states, and the communities where they serve. In agriculture without their labor during peace seasons many crops would be lost, much of the investment and effort of farm producers and processors would be sacrificed, and, as a result, prices of perishable commodities would rise. Due to the seasonal type of employment, a considerable number of workers and their families habitually migrate with the seasons from state to state, thus becoming permanent armies of nomads. Unorganized to a large extent and frequently entrusting to labor contractors their negotiations with employers regarding wages and employment conditions, migrant workers are afforded little opportunity to bargain for themselves.

These migrants are in most cases politically unfranchised, economically unorganized, and socially disadvantaged. Their employment is uncertain and fragmentary, their wages are low, and their average annual income per capita is less than \$600. The basic minimum standards and protections accepted as normal for industrial workers, such as social security, workmen's compensation in most states, adequate health and welfare facilities, fair labor standards, minimum wages, and collective bargaining, are denied these people who make up the largest single group at

the bottom of the economic ladder.

This means that persons created in the image of God suffer spiritually, physically, and socially. Christians as churchmen, employers, and legislators are called upon to show justice and love and mercy in their relationships toward migrants as well as toward all other men. We are recommending that:

1. Local churches take initiative in promoting ministries to migratory workers present in their vicinities.

2. Employers cultivate a greater sense of Christian responsibility toward their migratory employees.

3. State and Federal Governments bend every effort to write legislation that will extend to migratory workers and their families the protection and benefits enjoyed by industrial workers.

4. The Federal Government establish a national committee on migratory farm labor, to be appointed by, and responsible to, the President.

5. A similar committee should be established in the states where large numbers of migrants are employed in agricultural labor.

6. The Department of Social Education and Action continue to make a careful study of all plans of migratory labor.

NOTE: Space prohibits reprinting the entire section on agriculture. The complete report, *General Assembly Pronouncements—1954*, may be secured from the Department of Social Education and Action or the nearest Presbyterian Distribution Service, free.

## SOIL DEPLETION AND HUMAN EROSION

(Continued from page 15)

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barns, posts, etc., because man has destroyed so much of the dead wood on which they depend in the forests. Unfortunately, man's well-meant actions are often as rapacious, in the long run, as those intended purely for exploitation.

**Recent years** have brought innumerable changes in agricultural production. Breeding of livestock has "improved" herds, increasing the potentials of meat and milk. Since 1933, the hybridation of corn has greatly accelerated its yielding power. The use of machinery and fertilizer step up farm production. Yet the increased productive efficiency of these hybrids and new methods has given new cause for concern. No matter by what means the product from the land increases in volume, the soil remains the chief storehouse of plant and animal food. On the same land, a high yield takes more out of the soil than a low one of the same crop. Hybrids have become more efficient soil robbers than the old ancestral strains. Soils scientists now see the possibility of danger ahead in consequence of the greater drains upon the soil induced by the adoption of the new high-yielding varieties of plants and animals. Still, efficiency in farm production is a goal which must remain uppermost at all times.

Soil depletion is one of many

forces that have led, of late, to widespread farm abandonment. This proceeds in at least two ways: First, as the soil loses its productivity larger farm units become necessary, which leads to consolidation of farm units without actual abandonment of the land. Second, the land may become so completely worn out that it becomes necessary for the farmer to kick some ashes over the coals, call up the children, close the doors, whistle to the dogs, and walk away, which is outright abandonment.

Since 1940, every state in the Union has lost *farm* population. Soil depletion, drought, and pestilence have been contributing factors in this. When land wears out, at least for one type of farming, new systems of farming must be found. During recent years, one of the main shifts in farming has been from crops, requiring much, to livestock, requiring less, labor on farms. Crop farming in this country is now on the wane, except where either the technologies involved or the markets available provide unique economies of some kind. When such changes in productive processes occur the need for labor declines. Hence, migration offers the chief alternative to unemployment.

There are now about three times as great proportions of people past forty-five years of age living on

farms as in 1920 or 1930. It is mostly the young farmer, or prospective farmer, who has a hard time finding a foothold on the land. This is fraught with potentially serious consequences, not only for agriculture, but for many other strata of society also. Farmers past forty-five years of age are done with having children, for one thing. Hence, farmers have a weakening demand for schools, for certain types of recreation facilities, for the many things purchased only by people with children in their homes, and possibly for organized religious life in the country. In one Oklahoma farming community, the last farmer under thirty-five years of age found it impossible to live any longer without playmates for his children, school facilities, and other forms of necessary social participation. He sold out, moved to an air base, and became another member of the ever-growing group of industrial workers.

**These farm population trends** signify heavy losses to county government, local religious organization, schools, and to the general social life of the community. For example, the school system at Stockton, Missouri, is composed of more than forty former school districts, and it operates nineteen school buses. Each school bus carries "the last mortal remains" of at least two, and some of three, schools.

In 1947, Oklahoma's legislature

enacted into law a measure designed to liquidate 2,500 one-room schools within the five years, next, following. Within the first two years of the operation of that law, 1,900 schools closed. If a school fails to have an average daily attendance of thirteen pupils for one year, it becomes automatically a part of the nearest school able to provide transportation for its children, neither district being consulted in the matter.

Iowa maintains its one-room schools, transferring the few children in them to towns for schooling, the parents paying the tuition charges, in order to escape the high taxes of independent school districts. Iowa farmers believe they would be gypped in taxes if they allowed their farms to pass under the tax system of the town schools, a farm representing a much greater investment than the typical town property unit.

It has been learned that when thirteen farms disappear, one town business must close its doors, three people losing their livelihoods, besides the thirteen farmers who have lost theirs. From 1940 to 1950, Oklahoma lost 37,441 farms, enough to strangle 2,880 town businesses. Six or seven Oklahoma counties lost more than 1,000 farms each during that time. Little wonder that there are "pockets" all over the country where farm labor is stranded.

During the "dust bowl hegira" of 1934-1937, some 60,000 Oklahomans were intercepted en route to Cali-



fornia. Of these, 87 per cent said they had left home on account of either drought or lack of work (both could originate in the same source). These were not nomadic gypsies, 77 per cent having lived in Oklahoma for ten years or longer, and 53 per cent for twenty years or more. The typical migrating family was composed of a husband and wife under thirty-five and one child under ten years of age. Letting these people "starve out" cost Oklahoma their wages, the products of their labor, their market for what others produce, the investment of the state in their education, and whatever inheritances they may have had. More serious were the spiritual, aesthetic, and psychological losses which both the migrants and those left behind suffered.

**There is a new** awakening in the making. People everywhere are becoming conscious of the dangers of letting their farms go to ruin. Also, they are being moved to try to do something about it. In a letter of recent date, Leon J. ("T-Bone") McDonald declares: "There are only three ways for a farmer to increase his income:

- "1. Get more for what he sells.
- "2. Produce more per acre.
- "3. Produce more efficiently.

Soil conservation will help him do all three." Then, T-Bone McDonald reports that 58 Oklahoma counties, out of 77, carried out active programs on Soil Stewardship Sunday,

May 16, 1954. There were 406 churches participating, with 46,871 people in attendance, besides 17 county informational meetings with 358 persons in attendance. Also, there were held 12 field tours on which 86 ministers went to see soil conservation practices firsthand on the land.

For organized religion, the same as for national defense, the soil is vital. It matters little that people who cannot make a living cannot "pay the preacher," but it matters much that such people are too often denied the comforts of religion. With soil resources threatened, the very heart of American life is at stake—the home and family, the school, and religion itself.

There is no country in the world where the religious Reformation succeeded and still survives where men are not enlightened, free, and prosperous. There is not a country in the world where the Reformation failed and is still subdued where illiteracy, disease, vermin, and poverty do not stifle spirituality, where "chill penury does not freeze the genial current of the soul." If Christianity would prosper, it has no alternative but to strive to lift humanity materially while elevating it spiritually. Moreover, this is the test of time of a faith that lives. Churches cannot sing inside, "All things are ready, come to the feast," while people outside starve for the needs of the body. It does not make ordinary sense.

# Sanctuary

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## "THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S"

(Let the gulf of misunderstanding which divides the city dweller and the tiller of the soil be bridged. Every man, whether he labor in office, factory, or field; whether he use mind, hands, or both; whether he give orders, receive them, or neither—every man depends upon the labor of his fellows. And the good of all hinges upon the welfare of each. We are all bound inseparably together by the laws of economics, the laws of common humanity, and the law of God. "Therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee.")

### Call to Worship:

The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein; for he has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the rivers. (Ps. 24: 1, 2.)

### A Hymn of Praise:

"I Sing the Mighty Power of God"

"Ellacombe"

or

"For the Beauty of the Earth"

"Dix"

### Invocation (to be read in unison):

Almighty God, who hast made all creatures to thine own glory, and hast given to man dominion over thy creation, that his works may also praise thee; grant to us, we pray, that due sense of mutual dependence upon thee and each other, that will cause us to seek thy will in all our actions, and be mindful of our neighbors' good in all our labors. Enable us now by thy Holy Spirit, to worship thee with sincere thankfulness for the good earth thou hast given, and to remember with gratitude the numberless hands on which we depend for the needs of this life. We pray in the name of Him who came that we might have life, and have it more abundantly. Amen.

### Old Testament Reading: Genesis 1: 27-31

### A Hymn of the Harvest:

"Come, Ye Thankful People, Come"

"St. George's, Windsor"

or

"We Plow the Fields, and Scatter"

"Wir Pflügen"

### New Testament Reading: Luke 19:41-45

### Points for Meditation:

Someone has estimated that fully seventy per cent of the goods which are manufactured, sold, or consumed in the nonrural areas of America come in whole or in part from the soil. And if the raw materials which come from the forests and the bowels of

the earth—lumber, furs, minerals, and petroleum derivatives—are considered, the figure must become one hundred per cent.

On the other hand, those who are engaged in the production of raw food and fiber, minerals and oils, are dependent upon the fickle tastes, the fluctuating market, all the concurrent forces which are generated primarily in the great urban centers for their economic existence.

And all are mutually dependent upon the continuing providence of God from which comes the fruitfulness of the earth, the talents of body and mind, the sunshine and the rain which make the term "harvest" neither exclusively rural nor urban.

There are no problems which affect only one segment of American life (or any one part of the world, for that matter). A drought, farm price policies, a rail strike, an NLRB decision, a protective tariff—all are problems of crucial import for both rural and urban life. Send not to know for whom the bell tolls. . . .

### **A Hymn of the City:**

"Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life"

"Germany"

### **A Litany for Those Who Labor:**

O Thou all-wise Creator of the world, who hast made man in Thine image to have dominion over Thine other creatures, and hast given him the duty to subdue the earth, that it may yield the riches Thou hast hidden therein to supply his need: We thank Thee for the blessing of labor whereby we are made workers together with Thee:

*Bless and guide us, we beseech Thee.*

From injustice and oppression, from conspiracy and violence, from the choice of force instead of reason, from all denial of our common humanity, and our fellowship in Christ; from all contempt of those who toil and suffer; and from all shame of our own work:

*O Lord, deliver us.*

For all who till the earth and gather the harvest; for all who go down to the sea and do business in great waters; for all who work in offices and in shops; for all who labor in factories and at furnaces; for those who toil in the mines:

*Hear us, we beseech Thee.*

O Lord, our Heavenly Father, by whose providence the duties of men are varied and ordered: Grant to us all the spirit to labor heartily to do our work in our several stations, in serving one Master and looking for one reward. Teach us to put to good account whatever talents Thou hast given us, and enable us to redeem our time by patience and zeal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

—*Abridged, from The Book of Common Worship, 1946, pages 113, 114*

### **Benediction:**

And now may God, by whose providence the duties of men are varied and ordered, send us forth to labor heartily in our several stations, mindful that we serve him and each other to his glory. Amen.

—*Prepared by H. B. Sissel.*



# Christian ACTION

## AMERICAN LEGION REPORT ON UNESCO

The following report on the Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization of the United Nations (UNESCO) was prepared by the American Legion's special committee on the United Nations. This committee is headed by a former national commander of the American Legion, Ray Murphy. Section 2 of the report was printed in full in the *Congressional Record*. We have space for only a portion of it in these pages. A careful study of the report will clarify the purposes, aims, and work of UNESCO and will answer many criticisms levied against the agency.

### Needs to Be Better Understood

As a result of such study, it is fair to say that UNESCO is little understood by the very great majority of the people of this country. Accordingly, your committee believes it advisable to devote some space in this report to a discussion of UNESCO, what it is, . . . its purposes, programs, and methods, etc.

UNESCO is one of ten specialized agencies affiliated with, but not directly controlled by, the United Nations. It originated at a conference held in London in 1942, which was attended by the ministers of education of nine allied countries. Its present authority is found in Article 55 of the United Nations Charter, which states that the members of the organization shall promote "international cultural and educational co-operation." The quoted phrase was recommended by American consultants, who were representatives of business, agriculture, civic, labor, religious, and educational groups. On May 22, 1945, prior to the adoption of the United Nations Charter, the United States Congress unanimously adopted resolutions favoring the creation of a permanent international agency to promote educational and cultural relations. Members of the United States Senate attended a conference in November, 1945, as mem-

bers of a United States delegation. At this conference the Constitution of UNESCO was drawn. Authority for United States membership and participation in UNESCO, and for the establishment of a United States National Commission was approved by joint Congressional resolution on July 30, 1946, by a vote of 264 to 41 in the House, and without dissent in the Senate (Public Law 565, 79th Cong., 2d sess.). . . .

### They Have Security Clearance

The United States Government has a security clearance with UNESCO's Director-General, regarding the employment of Americans by the international agency. This action parallels the agreement worked out by the United States and the United Nations in this regard.

The current budget of UNESCO is about \$8½ million, of which the United States pays about one third, or \$2.8 million. Any United States contribution is authorized and appropriated by the United States Congress, year by year, and is included in the appropriations for the Department of State. In addition, approximately \$3 million is allocated for UNESCO use from the United Nations Technical Assistance Program. This is used for technical assistance principally in the field of education.

## Under Communist Attack

UNESCO has some sixty-seven member states at this time. The Soviet Union joined UNESCO only within the past two weeks or so. Three Communist satellite states—Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia—have resigned from UNESCO, each in substance stating in its letter of resignation to the Director-General that UNESCO “has joined the camp that preaches hatred and war among peoples.” They charged UNESCO with being a “tool of the United States policy of aggression” and with having “become a refuge for all that is the negation of culture and science, a refuge of fascist barbarism.” . . . It will be noted that membership in the United Nations carries with it the right to membership in UNESCO, and that it is by virtue of such right that Russia has now joined UNESCO, where it appears she has already begun her usual obstructive tactics. . . .

### Purposes

The chief purposes of UNESCO are:

1. To eliminate illiteracy and encourage fundamental education.
2. To obtain for each person an education conforming to his aptitudes and to the needs of society.
3. To promote through education respect for human rights throughout all nations.
4. To overcome the obstacles to the free flow of persons, ideas, and knowledge between the countries of the world.
5. To promote the progress and utilization of science for mankind.
6. To study the causes of tensions that may lead to war and to fight them through education.
7. To demonstrate world cultural interdependence.
8. To advance through the press, radio, and motion pictures the cause of truth, freedom, and peace.
9. To bring about better understanding among the peoples of the world.

10. To render clearinghouse and exchange services in all its fields of action.

### We Benefit from UNESCO

The program centers around efforts to raise levels of education; the improvement of health, nutrition, and literacy; assisting in scientific research to improve living conditions; the exchange of students and teachers among nations; and, together with other international agencies, to aid in the development of healthy productive communities and citizens with a sense of self-direction and responsibility. . . .

UNESCO supporters believe that we benefit directly from UNESCO operations in three ways:

1. In teaching the inhabitants of the underdeveloped areas modern techniques in science, education, and technology, it helps to draw these regions closer to American ideas, standards, and trade.
2. It benefits American science, education, and culture by facilitating the exchange of ideas and methods between American and foreign scientists and educators.
3. Any organization which helps to preserve the peace is to the interest of the United States which has the most to lose through war. . . .

### Attacks Not Justified

As is well known to the National Executive Committee, UNESCO has become involved in local controversies in some areas. There can be no doubt that some overzealous supporters of UNESCO have gone overboard in ascribing benefits to and from UNESCO which cannot be realized in fact. Such may have been the case in Los Angeles where a booklet called the *E in UNESCO* was attributed to UNESCO itself, when in fact the booklet was a production of the Los Angeles school system itself, and the controversy was local, involving the question of what should and should not be taught in Los Angeles schools pertaining to UNESCO and its

programs and work. Similar situations have existed elsewhere. The public misunderstanding of UNESCO may be attributed in large part to the fact that few people, indeed, know what UNESCO is all about. This is not the fault of UNESCO itself, which is not of itself a propaganda organization. While Communist countries have criticized UNESCO as the tool of the United States, on the other hand individuals and groups in the United States have attacked UNESCO on the basis that it has reflected ideals and philosophies alien to the American tradition. Among the attacks on UNESCO is one to the effect that UNESCO advocates world government. As a matter of fact, the Constitution of UNESCO expressly forbids it "from intervening in matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction" of the member states, and the United States National Commission for UNESCO states in substance that such charges have no basis in fact.

### **Opposed by Gerald L. K. Smith**

A principal charge against UNESCO is that it is subversive; that it is influenced or controlled by Communists, with the intention of undermining through its influence on American education, respect for the capitalistic system and private ownership of property in the minds of American school children; that it seeks to pervert the American teaching profession, and to destroy the worth and integrity of our public schools.

It may and should be said that the origin of at least a great deal of these charges is the American Flag Committee, and that due to such charges and to certain material issued by that group, and allegedly substantiating them, a small number of patriotic organizations, as well as the National Committee for the Abolition of the United Nations, headed by Gerald L. K. Smith, have taken stands in support of such charges.

### **Facts of the Case**

This reporting committee holds no brief for UNESCO, but it is charged with the duty of reporting facts as it finds them. It reports certain facts in relation to charges of subversion by UNESCO of our public-school system and of the minds of our school children as follows:

The *Congressional Record* of April 1, 1952, contains a statement by Congressman A. S. J. Carnahan, of Missouri, denouncing one of the supporting charges of the American Flag Committee, on which the positions taken by various other groups heretofore referred to have been based, as a complete fabrication.

It should be pointed out that UNESCO issues many publications that are available for purchase, but which do not necessarily represent any policy view or program of UNESCO itself, and may be contrary or irrelevant thereto, as, for example, reports of educational seminars in which individual educators participate and express their own views, perhaps different from or even conflicting with views expressed by other educators at the same or like seminars or elsewhere. This reporting committee will continue observation and study of UNESCO.

It is the view of those who favor UNESCO that—

1. Any organization which by encouraging ideas of co-operation and understanding among the nations of the world, thus helping to preserve the peace of the world, is to the interest of the United States.

2. Any organization that contributes to raising living standards throughout the world also contributes to the growth of the democratic way of life. . . .

3. UNESCO, in facilitating the exchange of ideas and methods between the United States and foreign scientists and educators, works directly toward increasing the knowledge and competency of our own scientists and educators.



## ★ Citizenship ★

**D**ESPITE earlier predictions to the contrary, at press time it looked as though President Eisenhower would get a rather impressive portion of his requested program from the 83d Congress. In the words of *The Washington Star*, "no Congress in recent years has given a President so much of his program as has the 83d."

There have been modifications and some compromise on certain issues, but as we go to press on the eve of Congressional adjournment, it appears that the Administration will be reasonably satisfied with the outcome. Much of this has been pounded out in the marathon sessions of recent weeks, particularly in the Senate. Whether the results will represent a program justifying approval of the voters in November, only time will tell.

At this writing it appears that Congress will wind up its affairs under a rather unique adjournment resolution. This will permit the members of the House to leave and go home while the Senate stays on, or takes a temporary recess, awaiting the report of the special committee considering the censure of Senator McCarthy. This committee is scheduled to start open hearings August 30, and has stated it hopes to complete these in about three weeks, with its report due shortly thereafter.

**Farm Bill**—Heralded as something of a political miracle, the Administration's farm bill providing for flexible farm price supports passed both the House and Senate and at press time was in a conference committee. The President has asked the conferees to reject two provisions in the House bill and accept the Senate version with respect to these items. One raises the price support floor on dairy products to 80 per cent of parity as opposed to 75 per cent in the Senate bill, and the other feature objected to in the House measure was a two-price plan for wheat. This provided for a referendum by the farmers to choose between continuing normal supports or accepting supports at 90 per cent of parity on wheat sold for domestic consumption with the rest of the crop going unsupported at world market prices.

In commenting on the Administration's victory in attaining passage of its farm bill, *The Washington Post* wrote: "[This] does not mean that the country's agricultural problem has been solved. It means only that the Administration has won the right to attack the problem in its own way, or, rather, that it will be granted some of the authority it requested for this purpose. . . . Congress has turned an important corner in its shaping of farm policy."

If this measure should bog down in the conference committee and no farm bill emerge this session, the 1949 Agricultural Act providing flexible price supports would automatically go into effect next January.

**Agricultural Surplus Bill**—A measure authorizing disposal abroad of up to \$1 billion worth of surplus farm commodities was signed into law early in July. The bill was entitled the "Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954" and authorizations under the act extend until June 30, 1957.

The bill provides for negotiation of agreements with friendly nations and organizations abroad for the sale of surplus commodities for foreign currencies. To reimburse the Commodity Credit Corporation for such transactions, \$700 million is authorized over the next three years.

In the same period, \$300 million worth of such commodities are to be made available to friendly nations to meet famine or other emergency requirements.

The Commodity Credit Corporation is also authorized to make surplus commodities available in the United States in areas declared by the President to be distress areas. Existing authority is also broadened to permit these commodities to go to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, school lunch programs, and public and pri-

vate agencies for assistance to needy persons.

**Foreign Aid**—As we go to press, the Senate has just passed the foreign aid appropriation bill providing for \$2.7 billion. The bill carries over \$2.5 billion in unexpended funds, making a total of \$5.2 billion available for allocation this year by the Foreign Operations Administration. The bill now goes to conference with the House. Since the latter passed a bill providing for \$2.9 billion in new money, it is expected that a compromise will be reached wherein the total available in new funds will be \$2.8 billion, making a final total of approximately \$5.1 billion.

Funds for the UN Technical Assistance Program were eliminated from the House bill, but the Senate measure contains approximately \$10 million for this program, enough to carry it through this December. The Administration had requested \$17.8 million.

The President's budget called for a foreign aid appropriation of approximately \$6 billion, claiming that any cuts in the measure would seriously damage our world-wide fight against Communism.

**Social Security**—With some modifications, the President's proposals for higher benefits, wider coverage, and other changes in the Social Security system have just passed the

Senate, at press time. The bill now must go to conference to iron out differences with the House-passed measure.

In general, the two bills follow the same lines with regard to benefits and taxes, but the Senate went beyond the House in liberalizing benefits for retired persons. The House figure is \$1,000 and the Senate figure \$1,200, on the ceiling income permitted without loss of any pension. Likewise the Senate lowered from 75 to 72 the age at which a retired person may earn an unlimited amount of money without loss of old-age benefits.

The President's proposal included coverage for an additional 10,500,000 individuals, but the Senate bill excludes some 3,600,000 farm operators and about 400,000 self-employed persons while the House bill excludes doctors.

This is a popular measure with much voter appeal, and in an election year no difficulty is anticipated by the conference committee.

**National Debt Limit**—Amid warnings from economy-minded Senators that the Administration must make a real start toward cutting costs, the Senate has just passed a bill to lift the national debt ceiling by \$6 billion for one year. The present ceiling is \$275 billion and the debt now stands at \$274.1 billion.

The Administration asked a per-

manent increase in the debt limit of \$15 billion, a year ago, and the House approved it but the Senate refused.

The Treasury modified its original request this session and asked for a permanent increase of \$5 billion plus a temporary rise of the same amount. Senator Harry Byrd (D., Va.) authored the compromise and called on the Administration to reduce spending sufficiently to eliminate the necessity for further increases in the debt limit. "The \$275 billion Federal debt which we now owe," he told the Senate, "is equivalent to the full value of all the land, all the buildings, all the machinery, all the livestock—everything of tangible value—in the United States. We are mortgaged to the hilt. . . . If we cannot balance the Federal budget and reduce the debt in peace and better-than-normal prosperity, when can it be done?"

When the Eisenhower Administration took office in 1953 the debt stood at \$267.3 billion. Annual budget deficits have been reduced since then, but expenditures have continued to exceed revenue and additional borrowing is required.

As we go to press, the bill granting the temporary increase in the debt ceiling to June 30 of next year is in conference, but it is thought that the House will acquiesce to the Senate proposal.

—*Helen Lineweaver,*  
*Washington Office*



# About Books

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**Let's Talk Sense About Our Schools**, by Paul Woodring. McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc. 213 pp. \$3.50.

**Quackery in the Public Schools**, by Albert Lynd. Little, Brown & Co. 282 pp. \$3.50.

Some of the critical problems that vex American education today have left citizens confused. These two books discuss intelligently and authoritatively some of the problems and controversial issues in current education and will help to clear much of the confusion.

Mr. Woodring believes that the worst thing about contemporary education is its confused philosophy. He states that the fundamental question facing us is, "What is good education for American children?" According to Woodring, American education is evolving, not toward progressive education, but past it to a democratic educational policy.

Mr. Lynd attacks vociferously the professional educators who comprise faculties of teachers colleges, and colleagues who control educational policies on the state and Federal level, contending that they do harm to education. He denounces curricu-

lum programs in teacher training institutions and believes that if a greater number of good minds were attracted to public education many of the absurd offerings of the faculties would "die on the vine."

This reviewer, a teacher, was encouraged and impressed by the discussion of both authors on the important role of the teacher in education. Mr. Woodring affirms that the typical teacher compares favorably in scholarship, intelligence, and common sense with typical members of other professions. He declares that our schools will do a better job in the future if we find more good potential teachers, educate them better, and pay them better. Mr. Lynd is a vigorous defender of increased salaries and believes that better pay will attract better minds.

Each author devotes a section of his book to the philosophy of John Dewey and his influence on public schools. Mr. Woodring expresses the merits and demerits of Dewey's interpreters in a calm and scholarly manner. Mr. Lynd is belligerent in his attack on the disciples of Dewey, especially W. H. Kilpatrick, professor emeritus of Teachers College, Columbia University. Mr. Lynd believes parents would not agree with

the progressive education philosophy if they really understood the original meaning.

These two books supplement each other and will enlighten citizens to better understand some of the existing problems of education. They provide excellent material to discuss contemporary public education intelligently. Neither author has offered constructive solutions to these problems but has left the solutions to the readers. Mr. Woodring's book would probably have a greater appeal to the lay reader. Mr. Lynd has used a satirical style which detracts from the problem at hand in some instances. —Roland R. DeLapp

**Fire in the Ashes**, by Theodore H. White. William Sloane, Associates, Inc. 398 pp., index. \$5.00.

This book is a "must" for anyone interested in world affairs, and who is not? It is a foreign correspondent's analysis of "Europe in mid-century," but it is more than that. Mr. White takes us behind the headlines to the underlying tensions. We read not only of events but of how these events affect people in Europe and over the world. Following each of the stirring chapters on postwar France, Germany, and England are short biographies of typical minor leaders in those countries, which personalize the analysis. Mr. White's years abroad as foreign correspondent give him a perspective on European Union, Communism in Russia,

China, and Europe, and on the leadership of the United States, which is fresh and invigorating. He reinforces the word that comes from our men in the foreign service that the vital center of our leadership in world affairs is in Congress, which "frequently comes close to crippling American purpose overseas" (p. 380). This provocative book should stir each citizen who reads it to a fresh understanding of his responsibility for the future of the world in electing to Congress men of vision and responsibility.

—John P. McConnell

**Catholicism in America.** A Series of Articles from *The Commonweal*. Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc. 242 pp. \$3.75.

*The Commonweal* is a weekly magazine, edited and published by Roman Catholic laymen. It operates under no expressed approval or endorsement of the Church. It has no power to speak officially for the Church. Its editions do not contain the imprimatur of the hierarchy. Neither does this book, consisting of articles which formerly appeared in the pages of the magazine.

All except two of the seventeen contributors to this volume are Roman Catholic laymen. The others are Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, a Protestant clergyman, and Will Herberg, a Jewish author and lecturer. Dr. Niebuhr's chapter is entitled "A Protestant Looks at Catholics," while

Mr. Herberg's contribution bears the heading "A Jew Looks at Catholics." Each of these two is much milder in its criticism of the weaknesses and handicaps of modern Roman Catholicism than most of the other fifteen articles by the laymen of the Church.

On the other hand, it must not be supposed that these writers espouse the totally destructive viewpoint of Paul Blanchard or even the moderately critical expositions of Thomas Sugrue. Aware of the weaknesses of the Church they certainly are. Despairing they are not. They are Roman Catholics. They intend to remain Roman Catholics. However, they want their fellow Catholics to know what the weaknesses of their Church are—and how to remedy them!

One cannot escape the conviction that the Roman Catholic Church need never worry so long as it has critical laymen of this sort in its membership. What the attitude of the clerical hierarchy will be remains to be seen. At any rate, Protestants who are sensitive about the weaknesses of their own Church will gain stimulus as well as information from a reading of this book.

—*Thomas Franklyn Hudson*

**War, Communism and World Religions**, by Charles S. Braden. Harper & Brothers. 281 pp. \$3.50.

Through personal studies and interviews, as far as possible at the centers of world religions, the au-

thor, a recognized authority on the history of religion, presents a picture of the interaction of war, Communism, and world religions. In many parts of the world the old religions, such as Shintoism, Buddhism, and Hinduism, are losing ground, and Communism is gaining. Some of the lesser religions seem to be little aware of the danger of Communism.

The author points out the fact that Communism has made many gains partly because the religions have been too little concerned about the social and economic conditions under which people have suffered. And, on the other hand, the threat of Communism has spurred the religions that are still vital to a concern for remedying these conditions.

Of all world religions, the author finds Christianity most alert to the dangers and doing most to remedy the causes which underlie war and the spread of Communism.

This is a very readable and informative presentation of the world situation to which the Church must direct its renewed and strengthened efforts with good hope of success.

—*Harvey E. Holt*

**Loyalty and Freedom**, by Rhoda E. McCulloch, published for the General Department of United Church Women, National Council of Churches, may be secured from the Department of Publications and Distribution, 120 E. 23d St., New York 10, N. Y. 35 cents.



## Roll Call on the 83d Congress

The voting records of members of the U. S. Senate and House of Representatives are now available. Ten issues were selected by a group of denominational leaders in the field of social education and action because of their usefulness in revealing where a member stands in relation to public questions of key significance. This record will be of great help in making your choices at the polls this coming fall, or in leading discussion groups dealing with Christian citizenship in your church or community.

Copies of the voting record may be secured from your nearest Presbyterian Distribution Service, for 10 cents each or \$7.50 a hundred copies.

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## Social Progress

One interested reader of our magazine is anxious that the principles and ideas presented in SOCIAL PROGRESS be brought to the attention of all leaders in each church. She feels this would be a ready-made way to bring these workers into contact with methods of applying Christianity in an "active, alive, real, and vital" way! In fact our reader has a plan she would like us to suggest to the minister of each church—a personal subscription to the following: each church school teacher, each member of the session, women's association representative, men's council representative, young adult group representative, Westminster Fellowship representative.

### Group Orders

5—10 yearly subscriptions  
11—100 yearly subscriptions

(to one address):

80 cents each  
60 cents each

### Club Orders

5—10 yearly subscriptions  
11—100 yearly subscriptions

(to separate addresses):

90 cents each  
75 cents each

Single subscription, \$1.00 for 1 year; \$2.50 for 3 years

# Farm Lingo Goes Technical

**Parity** is a formula to measure the purchasing power of farm prices. If a bushel of corn sells for 100 per cent of parity, the proceeds of that sale will buy the farmer as many Sunday neckties as the price of a bushel of corn bought during the base period. For commodities subject to old parity the base period is 1910-1914, while for modern parity the base is the most recent ten years. Transitional parity gradually bridges the gap between old and modern parity.

**Basic commodities** are wheat, corn, cotton, rice, peanuts, and tobacco, all of which have rigid supports at 90 per cent of parity. The Administration wants the first five to have flexible supports beginning in 1955.

**Rigid supports** are a fixed guarantee. They do not fluctuate from the established level.

**Flexible supports** fluctuate within a specified range, depending on supply. The support level for a commodity rises as supply declines, and declines as supply rises.

**Set-aside** is a device to reduce the amount of surplus which would affect the flexible-supports formula. Specified quantities of certain surpluses would not be counted for purposes of computing the level of support within the flexible range.

**Normal carry-over** is the quantity of a commodity, in excess of consumption, which is counted as reserve against possible shortages, rather than as surplus.

**Diverted acreage** is farm land which the farmer is required to take out of production of a crop in order to qualify for price supports. Acreage is restricted to limit production.

**Cross-compliance** is a regulation to require the farmer to comply with acreage restrictions on all controlled crops in order to get price supports on any.

**Total acreage allotments** restrict plantings of all cash crops—whether subject to individual acreage restrictions or not—on diverted acreage.

**Reseal** is a device for reducing the Government's requirements for facilities in which to store surpluses by extending crop loans. Farmers are paid storage fees if they keep commodities which they otherwise would turn over to the Government as forfeited collateral on price-support loans.

**Occupancy-guarantee** contracts are agreements by which the Government pledges to pay commercial warehousemen part of their loss if occupancy of expanded storage facilities falls below a specified level. The guarantee is designed to encourage expansion by reducing risk.

—Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, July 23, 1954. *Used by permission.*